AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

What is claimed is:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for increasing ~~the~~ a size of a frame of digital data from a first number of original symbols (L) to a second number of symbols (N), where the digital data comprising the frame is ordered from a first bit to an Lth symbol, the method comprising the steps of:

(a) Receiving the frame;

(b) Storing in a digital memory a first integer number (M) of copies of each of a first group of the original symbols, where M is greater than 1;

(c) Storing in the digital memory at least one copy of each of a second group of the original symbols;

(d) Further processing the symbols stored in the digital memory according to steps (b) and (c) in a digital communications system;

wherein the frame consists of the first group and the second group and the first group and the second group are mutually exclusive; and wherein steps (b) and (c) are performed such that the total number of symbols copied to the digital memory in steps (b) and (c) is equal to N.

2. (Original) The method according to claim 1 wherein step (b) is performed such that each of the second group of symbols is multiplied by the same number X.

3. (Original) The method according to claim 2 wherein $X = M + 1$.

4. (Original) The method according to claim 3 wherein the first group and the second group are selected by serially processing the symbols.

5. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 4 wherein symbols are selected to be in the first group or the second group such that, where A is a total number of symbols that have previously been selected for the first group and B is a total number of symbols that have previously been selected for the second group, the ratio between A/B is as close to 1 as possible~~, where A is the total number of symbols that have previously been selected for the first group and B is the total number of symbols that have previously been selected for the second group~~.

6. (Original) The method according to claim 1 where M=floor(N/L).